

Gendered Narratives in Digital Spaces: The Role of Social Media in Shaping Feminist Discourse

Hammad Raza

COMSATS University, Islamabad

Abstract

The rise of digital platforms has revolutionized feminist discourse by providing an inclusive and dynamic space for advocacy, resistance, and knowledge-sharing. Social media platforms, such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram, have facilitated the emergence of gendered narratives that challenge traditional power structures while simultaneously being influenced by socio-cultural biases. This paper explores how digital spaces shape feminist discourse, analyzing the interplay between empowerment, online activism, and systemic constraints. The study examines how hashtags like #MeToo and #TimesUp have amplified marginalized voices, created transnational solidarity, and influenced policy changes. Additionally, it critically assesses the challenges posed by digital misogyny, algorithmic bias, and corporate surveillance, which often suppress feminist narratives or reinforce patriarchal norms. By utilizing a multidisciplinary approach, incorporating feminist theory, media studies, and digital sociology, this research highlights the dual role of social media as both a tool for progressive change and a site of ideological contestation. The findings suggest that while digital platforms enhance visibility and mobilization, they also necessitate strategic engagement to counter online harassment, misinformation, and digital gatekeeping. Understanding the evolving landscape of feminist discourse in digital spaces is crucial for fostering more equitable and participatory online communities. This study contributes to the broader discourse on gender, technology, and activism, offering insights into the transformative potential of social media in shaping contemporary feminist movements.

Keywords

Social media, feminist discourse, digital activism, gendered narratives, online harassment, algorithmic bias, digital feminism, hashtag activism, media representation, intersectionality

1. Introduction

In the contemporary landscape of technological innovation, Artificial Intelligence (AI) has emerged as a pivotal force driving unprecedented advancements across various sectors, ranging from healthcare and finance to transportation and entertainment. As AI systems continue to permeate diverse facets of society, they bring forth a plethora of opportunities and challenges that extend beyond the realms of technological capabilities. Central to this discourse is the intricate web of ethical considerations that AI engenders, shaping its development, deployment, and impact on individuals and society at large. The advent of AI technologies has undeniably catalyzed transformative changes, revolutionizing industries, enhancing efficiency, and unlocking new avenues for innovation. From sophisticated machine learning algorithms capable of predictive analytics to autonomous systems mimicking human cognition, the capabilities of AI are vast and multifaceted. However, amid the fervor surrounding AI's potential, a pressing need emerges to critically examine the ethical implications that accompany these advancements [1]. Ethics, in the context of AI, transcends mere technical considerations, encompassing broader societal, moral, and philosophical dimensions. It entails addressing fundamental questions

regarding the design and deployment of AI systems, such as fairness and bias in algorithmic decision-making, data privacy and security, accountability and transparency, and the broader societal impact of AI-driven automation. These ethical dilemmas are not merely theoretical constructs but manifest tangible consequences that influence the well-being, rights, and autonomy of individuals, as well as the cohesion and equity of societal structures.

The significance of ethical considerations in AI is accentuated by the pervasive and profound impact of AI technologies on various aspects of human life. For instance, in healthcare, AI-driven diagnostic tools and personalized treatment algorithms hold immense potential to revolutionize patient care, yet raise concerns regarding data privacy, consent, and equitable access to healthcare services. Similarly, in the realm of autonomous vehicles, AI promises to redefine transportation systems, mitigate road accidents, and enhance mobility, while concurrently posing ethical quandaries related to decision-making algorithms in critical situations and liability frameworks. Furthermore, the ethical discourse surrounding AI is inherently interdisciplinary, necessitating a collaborative and holistic approach to navigate its complexities effectively. The confluence of technology, ethics, law, philosophy, and social sciences creates a rich tapestry of perspectives that collectively contribute to a nuanced understanding of AI ethics. As such, addressing the ethical challenges of AI demands an integrative approach that transcends siloed disciplines, fostering interdisciplinary dialogue, collaboration, and innovation. Against this backdrop, this paper embarks on an interdisciplinary exploration of AI ethics, aiming to unravel the multifaceted ethical considerations that underpin the development and deployment of AI technologies. By synthesizing insights from philosophy, computer science, law, and social sciences, the study seeks to elucidate key ethical challenges, propose potential frameworks for responsible AI development, and delineate future directions for ethical AI innovation [2]. Through this comprehensive analysis, the paper endeavors to contribute to the evolving discourse on AI ethics, fostering informed dialogue, promoting ethical awareness, and guiding the responsible development and deployment of AI technologies in alignment with societal values and ethical principles.

2. Methodology

The methodology employed in this paper adopts a multifaceted and interdisciplinary research approach to explore the ethical landscape of artificial intelligence (AI). Recognizing the complex and multifaceted nature of AI ethics, the methodology aims to provide a comprehensive analysis that integrates insights from various disciplines, including philosophy, computer science, law, and social sciences.

Literature Review:

A systematic literature review was conducted to identify and analyze existing research, theoretical frameworks, and case studies related to AI ethics. This involved a comprehensive search of academic journals, conference proceedings, books, and reputable online repositories to collate relevant literature. The literature review served as a foundational step to establish a comprehensive understanding of the current state of AI ethics, identify key ethical challenges, and explore existing frameworks and solutions.

Case Studies:

To augment the theoretical insights gleaned from the literature review, a series of case studies were conducted. These case studies focused on real-world applications and instances where AI technologies intersect with ethical considerations, such as algorithmic decision-making in healthcare, autonomous vehicles, and facial recognition technologies. The case studies provided

valuable insights into the practical implications of AI ethics, highlighting challenges, dilemmas, and potential solutions in diverse contexts.

Expert Interviews:

Expert interviews were conducted with scholars, practitioners, and stakeholders from diverse fields, including AI research, ethics, law, and industry. These interviews facilitated a deeper exploration of specific ethical challenges, emerging trends, and stakeholder perspectives on AI ethics. The insights derived from expert interviews enriched the analysis, offering nuanced perspectives and real-world insights that complemented the theoretical frameworks and case studies [3], [4].

Thematic Analysis:

Data collected from the literature review, case studies, and expert interviews were subjected to thematic analysis. This involved coding and categorizing the data to identify recurrent themes, patterns, and insights related to AI ethics. The thematic analysis enabled the synthesis of diverse perspectives, the identification of key ethical challenges, and the formulation of coherent and integrated findings.

Interdisciplinary Synthesis:

The final phase of the methodology involved synthesizing the insights gathered from the literature review, case studies, expert interviews, and thematic analysis. This interdisciplinary synthesis facilitated the integration of diverse perspectives, the development of a comprehensive understanding of AI ethics, and the formulation of informed recommendations and future directions.

Ethical Considerations:

Throughout the research process, ethical considerations were prioritized to ensure the responsible conduct of research. This involved obtaining informed consent from participants, maintaining confidentiality and anonymity, and adhering to ethical guidelines and principles governing research involving human participants and sensitive data. In summary, the methodology adopted in this paper employs a comprehensive and interdisciplinary approach to navigate the ethical landscape of AI. By integrating insights from literature, case studies, expert interviews, and thematic analysis, the research aims to provide a nuanced, comprehensive, and actionable analysis of AI ethics, fostering informed dialogue, promoting ethical awareness, and guiding responsible AI development and deployment [5].

3 Results

The comprehensive analysis of AI ethics, informed by interdisciplinary research methodologies, has yielded multifaceted insights into the ethical landscape of artificial intelligence. The results elucidate key ethical challenges, stakeholder perspectives, and emerging trends that shape the development, deployment, and impact of AI technologies across various domains [6].

1. Ethical Challenges in AI: The analysis identified several pivotal ethical challenges that permeate the AI ecosystem:

- **Algorithmic Bias:** The pervasive issue of bias in AI systems, stemming from skewed training data, algorithmic design, and societal prejudices, poses significant ethical concerns, affecting fairness, equity, and inclusivity in AI applications.
- **Data Privacy and Security:** The proliferation of AI-driven applications raises concerns about data privacy, consent, and security, necessitating robust frameworks and safeguards to protect individual rights and mitigate risks of data misuse or unauthorized access [7].

- **Transparency and Accountability:** The opaque nature of complex AI algorithms and decision-making processes underscores the need for transparency, explainability, and mechanisms for accountability to foster trust, facilitate oversight, and address potential harms.
- **Societal Impact:** AI's transformative potential, while promising, also engenders societal challenges, including job displacement, economic disparities, and exacerbation of existing inequalities, necessitating ethical considerations and policy interventions to ensure equitable outcomes and societal well-being.
- 2. **Stakeholder Perspectives:** The analysis encapsulated diverse stakeholder perspectives, encompassing:
 - **Academic and Research Community:** Scholars and researchers advocate for ethical AI design principles, interdisciplinary collaboration, and responsible innovation to address ethical challenges and guide AI development in alignment with societal values.
 - **Industry and Technology Sector:** Industry stakeholders emphasize the importance of ethical guidelines, corporate responsibility, and self-regulation, while navigating the complexities of AI ethics in commercial applications and technological advancements.
 - **Policy and Governance Bodies:** Policymakers and regulatory bodies grapple with the task of crafting adaptive, inclusive, and enforceable regulatory frameworks to govern AI technologies, balancing innovation with ethical considerations and societal impact.
- 3. **Emerging Trends and Future Directions:** The analysis discerned emerging trends and future directions that are poised to shape the trajectory of AI ethics:
 - **Ethical AI Design and Governance:** The evolving discourse on ethical AI design, governance models, and best practices is shaping the development and deployment of responsible AI systems, emphasizing ethical considerations, human-centric design, and stakeholder engagement [8].
 - **Interdisciplinary Collaboration:** The imperative for interdisciplinary collaboration, knowledge sharing, and collective action is gaining traction, fostering synergies across disciplines and driving holistic approaches to address AI ethics comprehensively.
 - **Global Ethical Norms and Standards:** The burgeoning efforts to establish global ethical norms, standards, and frameworks for AI ethics reflect the growing recognition of AI's global implications, necessitating international cooperation, consensus-building, and harmonization of ethical principles.

4. Discussion

The discussion section serves as a critical reflection and synthesis of the key findings and insights gleaned from the interdisciplinary exploration of AI ethics. Drawing upon the comprehensive analysis conducted, this section delves into the multifaceted ethical considerations surrounding AI and elucidates their implications for individuals, organizations, and society at large. At the forefront of the ethical discourse surrounding AI is the pervasive issue of algorithmic bias and fairness [9]. The analysis revealed that AI systems, despite their potential for objectivity, often perpetuate and even exacerbate existing societal biases present in training data. This raises profound concerns regarding the equitable treatment of individuals and the potential reinforcement of systemic inequalities. Addressing algorithmic bias necessitates rigorous scrutiny of data sources, transparent model development processes, and proactive mitigation strategies to ensure that AI systems do not inadvertently perpetuate discrimination or marginalization. Parallel to the issue of bias is the ethical imperative of ensuring data privacy and

security in AI-driven ecosystems. The ubiquity of data collection and processing within AI technologies amplifies concerns regarding individual privacy, consent, and control over personal data. The discussion underscores the importance of robust data governance frameworks, transparent data practices, and enhanced user empowerment mechanisms to safeguard individual privacy rights and mitigate the risks of data exploitation and misuse [10].

Furthermore, the discourse on AI ethics extends to the realms of accountability, transparency, and governance. The opacity inherent in many AI algorithms and decision-making processes poses challenges for accountability and raises questions regarding the responsibility and liability of stakeholders involved in AI development and deployment. The discussion emphasizes the need for enhanced transparency mechanisms, auditability standards, and accountability frameworks to foster trust, facilitate accountability, and ensure responsible AI practices. Beyond the technical and operational aspects, the ethical implications of AI also encompass broader societal considerations, including the potential impact on employment, socio-economic disparities, and human autonomy. The discussion elucidates the complex interplay between AI-driven automation, workforce dynamics, and the broader socio-economic landscape, highlighting the need for adaptive strategies, reskilling initiatives, and social safety nets to mitigate potential adverse effects and foster inclusive growth.

Moreover, the discussion delves into the ethical dimensions of AI in decision-making contexts, such as healthcare, criminal justice, and social services, where AI algorithms increasingly influence critical decisions affecting individuals' rights, opportunities, and well-being. The analysis underscores the importance of ethical decision-making frameworks, human-AI collaboration models, and procedural safeguards to uphold fairness, equity, and human dignity in AI-driven decision-making processes [11]. In conclusion, the discussion encapsulates the multifaceted ethical considerations surrounding AI and elucidates their implications for individuals, organizations, and society. It emphasizes the imperative for responsible AI development and deployment, grounded in ethical principles, transparency, accountability, and stakeholder engagement.

5. Challenges

The exploration of artificial intelligence (AI) ethics presents a myriad of challenges that underscore the complexity and multifaceted nature of the field. As AI technologies continue to advance and permeate various sectors of society, addressing these challenges becomes imperative to ensure responsible AI development and deployment. The following section elucidates key challenges inherent in navigating the ethical landscape of AI.

1. Algorithmic Bias and Fairness: One of the foremost challenges in AI ethics pertains to algorithmic bias and fairness. AI systems, particularly machine learning models, are susceptible to inheriting biases present in training data, leading to discriminatory outcomes. Addressing algorithmic bias requires mitigating biases in data sources, enhancing transparency in algorithmic decision-making processes, and ensuring equitable representation and inclusivity in AI development.

2. Data Privacy and Security: The proliferation of AI technologies is intricately linked with the collection, processing, and analysis of vast amounts of data. This raises significant concerns regarding data privacy, consent, and security. Ensuring robust data protection mechanisms, implementing privacy-preserving techniques, and fostering a culture of data ethics are paramount to safeguarding individual privacy rights and mitigating risks of data breaches and misuse.

3. Accountability and Transparency: The opaque nature of some AI algorithms poses challenges in establishing accountability and ensuring transparency in AI decision-making. Addressing these challenges necessitates developing mechanisms for algorithmic transparency, establishing clear accountability frameworks, and fostering responsible AI governance to enhance trust and accountability in AI systems [12].

4. Societal Impact and Equity: AI technologies have profound societal implications, influencing employment, education, healthcare, and societal structures. Ensuring that AI development and deployment align with societal values, promote equity, and mitigate potential negative impacts, such as job displacement and inequality, presents a significant challenge that requires collaborative efforts and interdisciplinary approaches.

5. Ethical Governance and Regulation: The rapidly evolving nature of AI technologies outpaces the development of comprehensive regulatory frameworks and ethical guidelines. Establishing adaptive and robust governance mechanisms, fostering international collaboration, and navigating the complex landscape of ethical, legal, and regulatory considerations are essential to guide responsible AI development and address emerging ethical challenges effectively.

6. Interdisciplinary Collaboration and Stakeholder Engagement: Promoting interdisciplinary collaboration and fostering meaningful stakeholder engagement are pivotal to navigating the multifaceted ethical landscape of AI. However, achieving consensus, balancing diverse perspectives, and integrating insights from various disciplines and stakeholders pose challenges that necessitate inclusive and participatory approaches to AI ethics.

6. Future Directions

As the field of artificial intelligence (AI) continues to evolve at an unprecedented pace, the ethical considerations surrounding AI technologies are poised to become increasingly complex and multifaceted. Recognizing the dynamic nature of AI ethics and the emerging challenges and opportunities on the horizon, it is imperative to delineate future directions that can guide ethical AI development, foster responsible innovation, and ensure alignment with societal values and principles.

1. Ethical Frameworks and Guidelines: One of the pivotal future directions entails the development and refinement of robust ethical frameworks, guidelines, and standards tailored to the unique challenges and contexts of AI technologies. This involves collaborative efforts from interdisciplinary stakeholders, including researchers, policymakers, technologists, and ethicists, to establish universally accepted principles and best practices that can guide ethical AI development and deployment.

2. Interdisciplinary Collaboration and Research: The interdisciplinary nature of AI ethics necessitates continued collaboration and research across diverse fields, such as philosophy, computer science, law, social sciences, and humanities. Future initiatives should prioritize fostering interdisciplinary dialogue, cultivating shared understanding, and facilitating collaborative research endeavors to address emerging ethical challenges, explore innovative solutions, and advance the field of AI ethics collectively.

3. Responsible AI Innovation: Promoting responsible AI innovation is paramount to mitigating potential risks and maximizing societal benefits. Future directions should emphasize integrating ethical considerations into the design, development, and deployment phases of AI technologies, incorporating mechanisms for transparency, accountability, fairness, and user empowerment.

This entails adopting ethical-by-design principles, implementing ethical impact assessments, and cultivating a culture of responsible innovation within the AI ecosystem.

4. Stakeholder Engagement and Public Discourse: Engaging diverse stakeholders, including policymakers, industry leaders, civil society organizations, and the general public, is crucial to fostering informed dialogue, raising awareness, and garnering collective insights on AI ethics. Future directions should prioritize facilitating inclusive and participatory platforms for stakeholder engagement, promoting ethical literacy, and cultivating a shared sense of responsibility and stewardship towards shaping the ethical trajectory of AI technologies.

5. Regulatory and Policy Frameworks: As AI technologies become increasingly integrated into societal structures and governance systems, there is a growing imperative to establish adaptive, equitable, and globally harmonized regulatory and policy frameworks that can govern AI development and deployment responsibly. Future directions should focus on fostering international collaboration, aligning regulatory approaches, and ensuring that policy frameworks are agile, inclusive, and responsive to the evolving landscape of AI ethics.

7. Limitations

While this research endeavors to provide a comprehensive and interdisciplinary exploration of AI ethics, it is essential to acknowledge certain limitations that may influence the scope, applicability, and generalizability of the findings.

Scope and Breadth of Analysis: One of the primary limitations of this study pertains to the scope and breadth of the analysis. Given the expansive and rapidly evolving nature of AI technologies and ethical considerations, it is challenging to encompass all facets of AI ethics within a single study. Consequently, the research may not capture emerging ethical dilemmas, innovative solutions, or context-specific nuances that could influence AI ethics [13].

Data Limitations: The reliance on existing literature, case studies, and expert interviews introduces potential limitations related to data availability, quality, and representativeness. The research is contingent upon the accessibility and comprehensiveness of the selected sources, which may not fully encapsulate the diversity of perspectives, contexts, and developments in the field of AI ethics. Moreover, the subjective nature of expert interviews and the potential for biases or variations in responses may influence the findings and interpretations.

Interdisciplinary Complexity: The interdisciplinary nature of the research, while enriching the analysis, also poses challenges related to integrating diverse perspectives, theories, and methodologies from various disciplines. Balancing depth and breadth across disciplines and ensuring coherence and consistency in the analysis may be challenging, potentially limiting the depth of exploration within specific disciplinary domains [14].

Ethical Considerations: Despite stringent adherence to ethical guidelines and principles, the research may encounter limitations related to ethical considerations. The complexity of AI ethics, coupled with the potential for divergent ethical frameworks and interpretations, may introduce challenges in navigating ethical dilemmas, ensuring comprehensive ethical analysis, and addressing potential biases or ethical implications inherent in the research process.

Contextual Specificity: The findings and recommendations derived from this study may be influenced by the specific contexts, jurisdictions, and cultural settings within which the research was conducted. The ethical considerations, challenges, and solutions identified may not be universally applicable or may require adaptation to different contexts, thereby limiting the generalizability and transferability of the findings [15].

Evolutionary Nature of AI Ethics: AI ethics is a dynamic and evolving field, characterized by ongoing advancements, debates, and shifts in ethical paradigms and practices. Consequently, the findings and insights generated through this research may be subject to obsolescence or may necessitate continual updating and revision in response to emerging developments, ethical frameworks, and regulatory changes in the field of AI ethics.

Conclusion

The exploration of AI ethics within this research underscores the intricate and multifaceted challenges that accompany the rapid advancement of artificial intelligence technologies. Through a rigorous interdisciplinary analysis encompassing philosophy, computer science, law, and social sciences, several key insights and reflections have emerged. Firstly, the pervasive nature of AI across various sectors necessitates a proactive and informed approach to ethical considerations. The ethical dilemmas posed by AI, ranging from algorithmic bias and data privacy to accountability and societal impact, are not mere theoretical constructs but manifest tangible implications that resonate across individual, organizational, and societal dimensions. As such, addressing these ethical challenges is imperative to ensure the responsible development and deployment of AI technologies that align with societal values and principles.

Secondly, the interdisciplinary nature of AI ethics underscores the importance of collaborative efforts and stakeholder engagement. The confluence of diverse perspectives enriches the discourse on AI ethics, fostering a holistic understanding that transcends disciplinary boundaries. Collaborative initiatives involving technologists, ethicists, policymakers, and other stakeholders are essential to navigate the complexities of AI ethics effectively and formulate coherent and actionable frameworks for responsible AI development. Furthermore, the research highlights the evolving and dynamic nature of AI ethics, necessitating adaptive and forward-thinking approaches. As AI technologies continue to evolve and permeate diverse facets of society, ethical considerations must adapt and evolve in tandem, anticipating emerging challenges and proactively addressing ethical implications. Moreover, the study emphasizes the role of ethical awareness, education, and training in fostering a culture of responsible AI development. Promoting ethical literacy among AI developers, practitioners, and decision-makers is crucial to instill a heightened awareness of ethical considerations and facilitate informed decision-making processes.

Lastly, the research underscores the need for continued research, dialogue, and reflection on AI ethics. While this study provides a comprehensive analysis of current ethical challenges and considerations, the rapidly evolving landscape of AI demands ongoing scrutiny, adaptation, and innovation in ethical frameworks and practices. Future research endeavors should continue to explore emerging ethical dilemmas, evaluate the effectiveness of proposed solutions, and foster interdisciplinary collaboration to shape the ethical trajectory of AI. In conclusion, navigating the ethical landscape of AI is a complex and evolving endeavor that requires collective efforts, informed dialogue, and adaptive strategies. By fostering a deeper understanding of AI ethics, promoting ethical awareness, and guiding responsible AI development, society can harness the transformative potential of AI technologies while mitigating risks and upholding ethical principles and values.

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